A Warning to the

FLOCKS

Againſt

WOLVES *in Sheeps Cloathing.*

OR,

A Faithful ADVICE, from ſeveral MINISTERS of the Goſpel, in and near *Boſton*, unto the Churches of *New-England*, relating to the Dangers that may ariſe from

Impoſtors,

Pretending to be *Miniſters.*

WITH

A Brief HISTORY of ſome *Impoſtors*, Remarkably and Seaſonably detected; Written, by One of the Miniſters in *Boſton*, to aſſert that Advice, and prevent future Miſchiefs.

Matth. 7. 15. *Beware of Falſe Prophets, which come to you in Sheeps Cloathing, but inwardly they are Ravening Wolves.*

Rev. 2. 2. *Thou haſt Tried them, which ſay they are Apoſtles, and are not, and haſt found them Lyars.*

Boſton, Printed for the Bookſellers. 1700.

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February 5, 1954

A Faithful Advice,

FROM

Several MINISTERS of the Goſpel, in and near *Boſton*, unto the Churches of *New-England*; relating to the Dangers that may ariſe from *Impoſtors*, pretending to be *Miniſters*.

IT is not without ſome Concern upon our Minds, that in the late Writings of our *Presbyterian* Brethren in *England*, we find awful Complaints, about *Bold Intruders* into the Work of the Miniſtry, & 'the ſwarming of that *Vermine*, with an hideous Noiſe, not in *Corners* and *Chambers*, but 'in the very *Pulpits*; likely to prove an *Egyptian* plague; upon which they add, 'If 'theſe Illiterate Uſurpers are not ſpeedily 'and effectually diſcountenanced by Miniſters and People too, they who are already the *Blemiſh* of *Nonconformity*, will quickly prove the total Ruine of it. But it ſatisfied us more than a little, to hear of their care that the Confuſions thus complained, may be prevented, by a *Vote* of this Impor-

tance, That they would Employ none to *Preach* in any of their *Pulpits*, but such as either arrived unto them with credible *Testimonials*, or submitted themselves unto a solemn *Trial* of their Qualifications for the Evangelical Ministry. Our *Congregational* Bretheren in *England*, being alarumed with a clamour of the Dangers hence arising to the Interests of our Holy Religion, we do with a like satisfaction find, they have lately published a Declaration, wherein, signifying, 'That inasmuch as they count none meet to dispense 'the Oracles of God unto others, who are 'not themselves Qualified for Communion 'in all Ordinances, their joining themselves 'to a *particular Church* of Christ, would be a 'good Expedient to prevent *Ignorant and Rash Intruders into the Ministry*; seeing then, it 'would be the Duty of *Particular Churches* 'and their Officers, to take special care, that 'none of their Communion, who are not '*Qualified*, may enter on that Work; they 'thereupon add, We Express our Dislike, 'and witness against all *Ignorant* and *Scandalous* persons, Entring on the *Ministry*; and 'we do in the Bowels of our Lord Jesus 'Christ, pray and beseech all such as fear 'God, that they give not the least Encouragement unto the Preaching of men, either 'Ignorant or Erroneous in the Great Articles

'o

'of Faith, or *Scandalous* in their Lives and 'Converſations, or otherwiſe *Unmeet for this* 'Holy Employment, Leſt they bring the *Guilt* 'of theſe mens Sins on their own Souls.

In Conformity to this *Watchfulneſs* of our *United Brethren*, we cannot but in the moſt publick manner, call upon our Churches, that they beware of all undue *Precipitancy*, in their Admitting *Unqualified perſons*, to be Received and Employed, in the Character of *Preachers* unto them.

We have indeed often wiſhed, That the Young men brought up in our own *Univerſity*, might appear with *Teſtimonials*, under the Hands of the *Præſident* and *Fellows*, That upon *Trial*, they are found *Able* and *Pious*, and likely to be *Bleſſings* unto the *Churches*; before the *Churches* venture too far in ſetting of them up for *Preachers*.

But inaſmuch as there have ſometimes arrived among us, *Deceitful Strangers*, who have ſet up themſelves for *Preachers*, and many unwary people have diſcovered much ſinful Folly, in ſuffering themſelves to be *ſtrangely Deceived* by thoſe *Impoſtors*, it obliges us unto a further point of *Paſtoral Vigilance* over the *Churches*, whereof we are made the *Overſeers*.

'Tis well known, That Worthy *Miniſters* of the Goſpel, Retiring to *New-England*, from other Countreys, have all along met

with Reſpects from our Churches, *Equal* (to ſay no more) unto what they have ſhown unto any of the *Paſtors* bred among themſelves; Heaven is witneſs, to the Injuſtice of the Slander by ſome uttered againſt us, *That we have been ever uncivil to Strangers*; and the *Strangers* themſelves have been Witneſſes, that no where under Heaven could they expect more *Civility*, than that wherewith we have ever treated them.

Nevertheleſs, we have, upon ſufficient Occaſions Reſolved, 'That for the future, no 'Stranger coming as a *Preacher* among us, 'without ſufficient Aſſurances of his being 'what he pretends to be, ſhall be Employ'd 'in our *Pulpits*, without a ſolemn Examinati-'on of his *Capacities*, for the Tremendous 'Work, of Preaching the *Glorious Goſpel of* 'God. And we earneſtly Requeſt, the Reverend Miniſters of the Goſpel, in the ſeveral Aſſociations and Vicinities throughout the Country, to joyn with us, in ſuch a neceſſary Reſolution.

We do alſo Solemnly Adviſe, all our People, to beware of Running after *New Preachers*, of whoſe Endowments and Principles, they have not had a Reaſonable Atteſtation; leſt they unawares run themſelves into ſhameful and woful Reflections. The Apoſtolical Injunctions, *To prove all Things*, does not invite Unſtable

liable people, to *Run after all Preachers*, (as they too often pervert the sence of it,) but it only directs people, to *Examine* by the Word of God, the Doctrine, which they hear, from those that in an orderly way are to be heard as their *Teachers*.

The *Preaching of the Gospel*, being that Grand Institution, whereon depends the Everlasting Salvation of men, Satan seeks it as a mighty Triumph, to pervert it unto their Everlasting Destruction. And a people, that *having Itching Ears, do after their own Lusts heap up Teachers to themselves*, do miserably render themselves, obnoxious unto the Impressions of those *New Preachers*, that will seduce them unto *damnable Heresies*. Or, suppose the *New Preachers*, do broach no *New Errors*, yet if they shall prove *Cheats*, that have made the *Preaching of the Gospel* only a *Cloak*, for their *Covetous*, or *Lascivious*, or other profane Designs, they that shall have *too suddenly improved* those men, will be *partakers of their Sins*. And the Glorious Ordinances of God will be likely to fall into a loathsome *Contempt* among the people, if Contemptible Fellows can Easily prostitute them unto their pernicious purposes.

The *Sermons*, wherein the *Everlasting Gospel* is *Preached*, as well as the *Prayers* made in our Congregations; are to be Considered, as

a principal part of the *Worship of God* among the People of God: they are to Glorify God, & our Lord Jesus Christ, with agreeable *Confessions* of the *Truths* He ha's Revealed unto us; &c, as in the *Peace Offering* of old, *God* hath *His* part in them, as well as the People *theirs*. Hence, whether the people that are the Hearers, be many or few, learned or weak, froward or meek, the *Preacher* must prepare an *Offering*, as far as he can, Suitable for that God, who is a *Great King and whose Name is Dreadful*. But if Every piece of Ignorance, and Arrogance, be set up for a *Preacher*, the Name of the Holy God, will be profaned, with an *Offering*, that is made a *Ridicule* in the *Repetition*.

We are not unsensible, that one thing, which ha's much Exposed some *Injudicious people* among us, is, An opinion that *Illiterate Men*, may be Serviceable and Admirable *Preachers*. Now, inasmuch as the *Jesuites*, have given this among their Instructions to their Emissaries, *To teach that Learning is needless in a Minister, and if they understand the Gospel, it is Sufficient*, we are sorry that any of our people should be so *Besotted*, not to say, *Bejesuited*. When the Knowledge of the *Tongues* and *Arts* Revived, *Religion* had a Revival with it: And though some *Unlearned* men have been useful to the Interests of *Religion*, yet no man ever decried *Learning*, but what was, an Ene-

my to *Religion*, whether he knew it or no. When our Lord, chose *Fishermen* to be *Ministers*, (which often is impertinently pleaded) He would not send them forth, until they had been a considerable while under His *Tuition*, (a better than the best in any *Colledge* under Heaven!) and *then* also He Miraculously Furnished 'em with more *Learning*, than any of us, by *seven Years Hard Study* can attain unto. If God, should be provoked by the *Unthankfulness* of men, to send the Plague of an *Unlearned Ministry* upon poor *New-England*, soon will the *Wild Beasts of the Desart ly there, the Houses will be full of doleful Creatures, and Owles will dwell there.* Ordinarily, that man, who undertakes the *Ministry* of the Gospel, without some *Education* for it, is, we doubt, in as presumptuous an Error, as the unhappy *Uzzah*, that perished in his *Error*: though we also allow different *measures*, and *places*, for that *Education*. And that man was never worthy to *Preach* one *Sermon*, who did not feel, and would not own, that all the *Learning* that can be had, is little enough to accomplish an *Able Minister of the New Testament*.

Upon the whole, As *Luther* observed, That God punished the Primitive Churches, with *False Teachers*, for their starving, and sleighting of their *Faithful Ministers*; Thus, we fear the Churches of *New England* may

suffer

ſuffer miſchiefs in Time to come from *Falſe Teachers*; and we ſee cauſe to Admire the Compaſſion of Heaven unto this Land, that ſuch Dangerous Things have all this Time done ſo little Damage, unto any of our Churches. But as the Church of *Epheſus*, having been warned by the Apoſtle, *That grievous Wolves would enter in among them*, was afterwards commended by our Saviour, for ſo taking the warning, that *they Tried them who ſaid, they were Apoſtles when they were not ſo, and found them liars*: Even ſo, we would hope, that after this Day, no *Untried perſons* will be Entertained for *Preachers*, in any of our Colonies.

We lay this Advice before our Churches, purpoſing to do our part, in attending to it.

Increaſe Mather
James Allen
Samuel Willard
Moſes Fiſke
Benjamin Woodbridge
Nehemiah Hobart
John Danforth
Cotton Mather
Nehemiah Walter
Jonathan Pierpont
Joſeph Belcher
Benjamin Wadſworth
Benjamin Coleman.

Boſton, *Decemb.* 28. 1699.

An HISTORY,
Of Some
IMPOSTORS,

Remarkably and Seasonably detected, in the Churches of New-England: *Written to maintain the Advice Published by some of the Pastors in those Churches relating to* Impostures, *and prevent all future Mischiefs from them.*

IT was a notable Discipline, by which the Reformed Churches in *France*, preserved themselves, from the Intolerable Mischiefs, arising by the allowance of *Unworthy Preachers*: Their National *Synods* every Time they Sat, would publish a *Roll* of those *Unworthy Preachers*, that could be found creeping in among them, and with a description of their Feature, and Stature, and other circumstances, like what uses to be given in an *Hue in Cry*, this *Roll* would notify the Crimes laid unto their charge, and admonish all People to beware of Entertaining them.

The

The Churches of *New England*, have *Heretofore* been in ſuch *Good Order*, that no man could be Ordained and Received as a *Paſtor* in them, without the Concurrence of the Churches in the Vicinity, and a very ſolemn and publick Action. But a *Good Order* ha's never yet been provided among us, that no Untryed, and Unfit perſon, ſhall ſet up for a *Preacher*, and run about from Town to Town, getting into the too much *unguarded Pulpits*, and threatning our Holy Religion, with no little *Inconvenience*. Now to prevent and redreſs, this *Inconvenience*, it ha's been by ſome Conſiderate perſons deſired, That ſomething like the *French Roll* may be Exhibited unto the Churches of *New-England*, which may Exemplify ſome few of the many *Cheats*, that have gone to Impoſe upon them. It is unreaſonable to complain, That the *Crimes* of thoſe Cheats are thus *openly* Expoſed; for, I beſeech you, Sirs, are they not as *openly* Committed? Men are too inſenſible, of the horrible *Villany* and *Blaſphemy*, in the *Crimes* of thoſe Fellows, who ſet up for *Teachers* to the people of God, when God knows they are wicked *Vagrants* and *Varlets*, deſigning to abuſe the Honeſt people; if they imagine it, a *ſevere* Thing, to ſtigmatize them, in the view of all the affronted Churches. The Faults of the *Pœnitent*, indeed ſhould be *Concealed*;

cealed; but these pretended *Preachers* of *Repentance*, are not known to *practise* the *Repentance* which they *Preach*. A *Pillory* were a very gentle punishment for the Wretches, who wholly unqualifyed *Steal* into a *Pulpit*, and *Forge* a *Commission* from the King of Heaven unto His Churches. Our *Laws* not providing such a punishment for them, they that would be faithful to the Churches, will do well (for did not the Apostle as much to *Hymenæus*, & *Alexander*?) to set them up in an *History*, instead of a *Pillory*, with a *Writing*, as it were in *Capitals*, to signifie, THESE WERE IMPOSTORS THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN ESTEEMED MINISTERS.

The Consequence and Advantage of this Action, 'tis hoped, will be, That both *Pastors* & *People*, will be more wary of being too sudden, in asking to *Preach* for them, those to whom they are utter *Strangers*: *That* needy and profane *Strangers*, will no more venture to *Preach* in a Country, where their detected Wickedness will be proclaimed for the *Terror* of all that shall come after them: *That* all pious minds will give glory to the Lord Jesus Christ, who *Walks in the midst of His Churches*, when they see what *Quick Work*, He has ordinarily made in these Churches, to discover those *Atheistical Preachers*, that have so horribly mocked Him: and admire

His

His Gracious and Watchful *Providence*, in ſtill delivering His Churches, from thoſe *Little Foxes*, that would have ſpoiled them. And now, we will Addreſs our ſelves to do that, which when 'tis done, what will they merit but the Cardinals Bleſſing, who will take no warning?

§ 1. THE very *Firſt Miniſter* (one *Lyford*) that ever came into *New England*, (which was in the Year, 1624.) at his firſt coming did Careſs the good people at *Plymouth*, with ſuch extream ſhows of Affection and Humility, that the people were mightily taken with him, nevertheleſs within a little while, he uſed moſt malignant Endeavours to make *Factions* among them, and confound all their *Civil* and *Sacred* Order. At laſt there fell into the Hands of the Governour, his *Letters* home to *England*, fill'd with wicked and lying Accuſations againſt the people, of which things being ſhamefully convicted, he did publickly in the Church confeſs with Tears, *That he had ſlanderouſly abuſed the good people, and that God might juſtly lay innocent Blood into his Charge, for he knew not what hurt might have come through his Writings, and that Pride, Vain-glory, and ſelf love had been the cauſes of his miſcarriages.* Theſe things he uttered ſo pathetically, that they again permit-

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ted him to Preach among them: And yet in two or three months he ſo notoriouſly renewed his miſcarriages, which he had thus bewailed, that his own Wife, thro' the Affliction of her mind at his Hypocriſy, could not forbear declaring her Fears, that God would bring ſome heavy Judgment upon their Family, not only for theſe, but ſome former Impieties by him committed, eſpecially in fearful Breaches of the *Seventh Commandment*, which he had with an Oath deny'd, though they were afterwards Evinced. Being thereupon Baniſhed, he went unto *Virginia*, where he ſoon ended his Dayes.

The Diſaſter thus befalling of this Country in the *Firſt Miniſter*, that ever came into it, ſeems to have been an Intimation from Heaven unto the Country, to beware in all after-times, how they ſuffered *Cheats* in the Evangelical *Miniſtry* to be Impoſed upon them. Nevertheleſs, there have Crept in ſeveral *Cheats*, among the Churches, which have been ſpeedily, and notably Detected. It will be neither Needful, nor Uſeful, that they ſhould be *all* Enumerated: *Some* of them ſhall.

§ 2. MAny among us, do ſtill Remember, a Fellow that made himſelf Memorable, by Preaching Zealouſly on that Text, *Let him that Stole, Steal no more*; when he had

had at that very Time a parcel of *Stolen* Money in his Pocket. The Sum, as I remember, was *Five Pounds*; but in the dozed Conſcience of the Thief, it hardly made the weight of a *Scruple*.

§ 3. I Have been informed, That a certain Gentleman in the Southern parts of this Land, having with much pains, taught an *Iriſh Servant* in his Family, to be *almoſt* able to read *Engliſh*; this fellow, after his Time was out, ſet up for a *Preacher* in a Neighbouring Plantation: But the Gentleman his Maſter, happening ſome Time after to meet our Preaching *Teague*, ſeverely Chid him, for his preſumpteous Arrogance, and among other Expreſſions, beſtowed this pretty *Satyrical* Scourge upon him; *If ſuch Fellows as thou art, may ſet up for Preachers, there will be one Text impoſſible ever to be Preached upon, or to be fulfilled or underſtood: The Almighty in one Text, threatens as a Judgment,* A Famine of Hearing the Word of the Lord; *But if ſuch Varlets as thou art, may be Preachers, 'tis impoſſible, that ſuch a Judgment ſhould even be Executed!*

§ 4. MAny of thoſe perſons, who have gone to Inſinuate themſelves into our Churches, with *Spirits* in them, that were

were for their Covetous, or Contentious, or Ambitious, or otherwise Evil Inclinations, displeasing to the *God of the Spirits of all Flesh*, have been immediately and remarkably confounded, by their being left unto the Criminal Folly of Preaching *Stollen Sermons*. The detected *Plagiaries*, have gone off, *as a Thief is Ashamed when he is found*. One happy Hindrance to the Designs of the *Fiery Serpent* have been this *way* afforded among us.

Others *Remember* Instances; I shall not *mention* them.

§ 5 A Young Fellow, (one *Dick Swayn*) that had been Servant unto a Captain of a Ship in *Boston*, after a thousand Rogueries, had his Time given him, by the Widow of the Captain, when she became so, because that she would not be troubled with so Theivish, Lying and Wicked a Villian. This Fellow was afterwards detected in Villanies, enough to fill a Volumn, which procured his going in miserable circumstances to *Virginia*; from whence he got through several Stages, at length unto the Island of *Providence*! There the Monster set up for a Preacher of the *Gospel*, and putting on a Mighty show of Religion, he was Mightily followed and admired; and the people treated him with a more than ordinary Liberality. Percieving that it was Time to be gone from

thence, he forged Letters of his Fathers Death in *England*, by which a vaſt Eſtate was fallen to him; under the umbrage of that Forgery, he gets off immediately by a Veſſel, that muſt firſt carry him to *New-England*. Having Preached ſeveral Sermons in the Southern parts of *New England*, he comes to *Boſton*, in the year 1698. Where in private Houſes, he would be ridiculouſly forward in thruſting himſelf upon *Prayer*, which he would manage with a Noiſe, that might reach all the Neighbourhood. He began to Court Opportunities of *Preaching* among the Neighbours; but forgetting to change his Name, the Gentlewoman to whoſe Deceaſed Husband he had been a Servant, accidentally coming in to the Houſe where he lodged, and hearing one of that Name exceedingly cryed up, as a worthy, able, eminent man, ask'd for a ſight of him. When to her Aſtoniſhment ſhe found, it was *Dick*, even that very Scandalous *Dick*, that had plaid ſo many abominable Pranks in her own Family ſome years ago. The Gentlewoman, could Scarce believe her Eyes; and finding the Vagrant not give her any intelligent Account how he became a *Chriſtian*, it was yet more unintelligible to her, how he became a *Miniſter*. He begg'd her Pardon for all his old *Knaveries*, but ſhe being adviſed that he was now practiſing of *New* ones, took a courſe that the

people ſhould be deprived of ſo *Charming* a *Preacher*, as no doubt, ſome of the Giddy Populace would have counted him. So, without any more Diſturbance, but only the cheating ſome credulous Folks, of conſiderable Sums of Money, he marched off.

§ 6. A Fellow, in this preſent year, 1699 appeared in *Boſton*, pretending to be a Miniſter: concerning whom, an Honeſt and a Diſcreet man, in the Country having a juſt Fear, leſt our Charity ſhould unjuſtly, and unawares, take too kind notice of him, wrote me the following Account.

'This day, a man, whoſe Name is *Eleazer* 'Kingsberry, ... in diſcourſe with him, told 'me, He had Preached the Goſpel four 'Months; He ſhewed me a *Certificate* to 'prove it, with about Twelves Names to it, 'all Written by his own Hand, (the Inſtru-'ment was drawn by another,) He alſo told 'me, he Preached the laſt Sabbath, between '*Tanton* and *Freetown*, before a conſiderable Aſ-'ſembly; which was confirmed by a man 'of *Tanton* then preſent. Conſidering how 'God is likely to be diſhonoured, and the 'Goſpel ſcandalized, by him, I thought it 'my Duty to undeceive you, by giving you 'the following Relation. He was born, and 'brought up in *Wrentham*, and bound pren-

'tice to a *Tailor*, but ſo Vitious a Servant, 'that his Maſter could do no Good with him. 'He gat *Free*, and Married a Wife; but not 'long after *Stole*, and left her; and adding 'to his *Felony* ſeveral other Vitious Tricks, he 'went to the *Weſtward*. From thence he 'wrote a Letter to *Wrentham*, which conſiſted 'chiefly of *Lyes* and *Curſes*. When I now 'ſpake with him, I adviſed him to follow 'his *Calling*, and provide for his *Wife*, and not 'ſeek to Diſhonour God, and deceive his 'People. He replied, As for his Wife, ſhe 'was a Devilliſh Jade, and he would never 'take her more; but when he was Settled, 'and had an Houſe, he would take her as 'a Servant; and if ſhe would not obey him, 'he would kick her into the Fire; but he 'would go on in *Preaching*, ... and he '*would wage twenty pieces of Eight, he would get* '*Money, and Credit in a ſhort Time.* ... I could 'fill a Sheet of paper, but I hope, I have 'ſaid enough to prevent his having any En-'couragement from you; and what further 'ought to be done concerning him, I leave 'to your Conſideration.

One of the Miniſters, in *Boſton*, immediately ſent after him, a Letter under a flying Seal, Solemnly charging him, to leave off the preſumptuous and Blaſphemous courſe, that he had thus taken up, and return unto his

Family

Family and Employment; and giving him to understand, that the *Justices* every where should be informed of him, as being, *A Vagabond*. Hereupon, the *Vagabond*, as I am told, changed his Name into *Berry*, & Ran away to a place called, Cape *May*, where I am also told, the people were so *Bewitched* with him, that they were almost ready to tear in pieces any man, that should speak diminutively of him.

§ 7. BUT tho' this Bird flew away to the Southward, unto Cape *May*, another, whose pretended Name was *May* came upon this Coast about the same Time. And on that Occasion, an Excellent and Ingenious person, wrote unto me such passages as these.

'*May* uses to prove Pleasant and Healthy; 'but the *Mob* are wont to Dance, at the Entrance of it, let it prove how it will. Mr. '*Parker* used to say, *The people love to Tap a* '*New Barrel*. I think, I once told you of 'E. F. and *M. J.* but lest I have not, I'le 'give you a word of each.

'*E. F.* Sometimes of *Salem*, coming to '*New Haven*, on Saturday Even, being Cloathed in *Black*, was taken for a *Minister*, and 'was able to Ape one, and Humoured the 'mistake, like him that said, *Si vult populus decipi, decipiatur*. Word being carried to

Mr. *J. T.* that a *Minister* was come to Town, he immediately procured him to Preach both parts of the Day. The First was to Acceptation; but in the Last Exercise, he plentifully shewed himself to be a whymsical Opinioniſt, and beſides Railed like *Rabſhakeh*, and Reviled the Magiſtrates, Miniſters and Churches, at ſuch a rate, that the people were ready to pull him out of the Pulpit.

§ 8. THe ſame Worthy Perſon goes on. *M. J.* A Welch Tanner by Trade, ſome time Servant unto Capt. *T.* at *Salem*, left *Salem*, went to *Say-brook*, work'd at his Trade, and Stole Mr. *W.*'s Leather Breeches. Thence he went to *Staten Island*, by *New-York*, and Set up for a *Preacher*, being a ready *Prater*. At the Information of a pedling Trader, he had an Invitation by ſome few of *Killingworth*, to viſit them, and Preach in order to Settlement. He came; but happning to ſpeak irreverently of ſomething in the Scripture, before ſome of the people, it occaſioned ſuch Diviſion & Tumult, that he was not ſuffered to Preach, before Mr. *Buckingham's* Advice and conſent was obtained; which when ſought, he adviſed them to Enquire firſt whether this were not the Fellow that

Stole

Stole the Leather Breeches. This proving even ſo, prevented him at *Kilingsworth*. Thence he went to *Brainford*, the night before a Faſt, and making known his pretended Function, it was counted a good Providence; for they had no Miniſter, and he was earneſtly deſired to Preach, and as readily accepted it. But one *Peter Stent*, a Brother that uſed to Pray and Read a good Sermon among the People, when they had no Miniſter, knew nothing of this, (for he lived at a Farm,) but in the morning came provided, to Read one of Mr. *A. Gray's*, Sermons. But he found *Morgan* at it, when he came; and when he named his Text, it was the ſame *his* intended Sermon was on: and out of Curioſity, to ſee how mens wits jumpt in proſecuting the ſame Text, he turned to his Book, and found *Morgan* the ſame with Mr. *Gray*, word for word. He followed him while he was weary, and at length run before, to a place in the Sermon, that ſpoke of *Glaſgow Sinners*, and there Lay wait for *Morgan*; but when he came there, he turned it, *New England Sinners*; and that was all the variation in the whole Sermon. The people were mightily affected with the Sermon, and were hot upon calling *Morgan* to the Miniſtry. But *Stent* diſcovered the Cheat. So they diſ-

' miſſed him, and the *Tanner* departed with
' Liberty to go as far as a New pair of *Shoes*
' would carry him.

§ 9 *Aſcination* is a thing, whereof mankind ha's more *Experience* than *Comprehenſion*. And *Faſcination* is never more notoriouſly ſenſible, than in Mens Running after *Falſe Teachers* of Religion. When *Falſe Teachers* Impoſed on the *Galatians*, the Apoſtle ſaid, *O Fooliſh Galatians, who hath bewitched you!* One cannot eaſily aſcribe unto a Truer cauſe, than a *Satanick Energy*, the ſtrange *Biaſs* upon the minds of a multitude, forceably and furiouſly ſometimes carrying them into Follies, from whence the plaineſt Reaſon in the World will not Reclame them. What, but ſuch an *Energy* could be upon the minds of many people in *Boſton*, after the Arrival of one that went by the Name of *Samuel May*, about the Beginning of *July*, 1699. The wonderful Succeſs of *Mahomet* upon a World where Chriſtianity was to another Degree loſt, than it is yet in *Boſton*, was no longer a wonder unto us, when we ſaw the Succeſs of *May*, in a place of ſo Chriſtian a Character as *Boſton*. It was all over pure *Enchantment*: He ſhow'd unto one Miniſter at his firſt Arrival, a *Teſtimonial* of little but ſome hopes of his being a man of

a *sweet Gospel Spirit*, Signed with two Names, whereof one was of a man, that once had been a Scandalous *Fire Ship*, among the Churches in this Country: Which when this Blade understood, he would never after shew his *Testimonial* to any more of our Ministers, tho' they earnestly and frequently ask'd him for it. So *Silly* and *Shallow* a person he was, that it was impossible for any but such to be many minutes in his Company without being sensible of it. The first thing that made some to suspect him was, his using to Lift up his *Eyes* and *Hands*, with strains of Devotion used by none others in the Assembly, after he had first look'd about to see who look'd upon him. Numberless marks of a *Cheat*, were daily more and more discovered in him; nevertheless, he was able to imitate a plausible *Utterance* and *Action*, and seem'd so zealously set upon *Inviting men to Christ*, that after Sermon was over, he would make *another Speech*, to put 'em in mind on't. Abundance of the people became so fiercely set for him, that they poured out a thousand expressions of Rage, upon the Faithful Pastors of the Town, that thought not such an *Illiterate* Creature, (who by his own Confession, had never been one year under any Education,) worthy to be set up in the publick Pulpits. Though the bigger and

wiser

wiſer part of the Town, were not ſeized with this *Bigotry*, yet a multitude became ſo Furious, that making it their buſineſs, to ſolicit all ſorts of perſons to go a *Maying* with them, if any Refuſed, they could hardly eſcape ſome Reproach for it. The *Jews* were hardly more engaged for their *Sabatai Sevi*. The Diſciples of this *Money Catcher*, became ſo *Exceeding Fierce*, many of them, that ſome ſober men, became afraid of *Paſſing by that way*, where one muſt Encounter them. Though he were detected in ſeveral Crimes, as, pretending to *Languages* which he knew nothing of, and this in the ſpecial Service and Preſence of the Lord; and Preaching *Stollen Sermons*, wherein he could not produce one material Sentance of his own; and horrid *Lying*, in very Repeted Inſtances: Yet his Followers would go on, making *Ridiculous Apologies* for him, and *Malicious Invectives* againſt any that would not yet believe him an *Eminent Saint*. Yea, they began to throw *Libels* into the Houſes of the Miniſters, the moſt inſolent that ever I ſaw. The *Anabaptiſts* Employ'd him at their *Meeting-Houſe*, which was now filled with great Congregations: and it was an undeſerved, an aſtoniſhing, a very memorable *Mercy* of God unto the Town, that this man, was now kept from venting any *Hereſies*, among a people, that made

made themſelves to become ſuch *Tynder*, for any Sparks, that he might ſtrike into them. And yet it was another Mercy as great as This; that the Young Women in the Town, were not betray'd and debauch'd into fearful Whoredoms: For, at length, Witneſſes, Good, Vertuous, Credible Witneſſes appear'd, that ſhew'd him, to have been as dangerous a *Devil*, as the poor Young Women could have met withal, when, by a certain Reverence for him as a Miniſter, they were prepared for his vile Sollicitations. He perceiv'd thoſe things beginning to break out; and away he flew: none of the Endeavours uſed by his Admirers, to make him ſtay, could ſtop him. The *Paſtors* of the Churches, had before made this Reflection, That after men of the of moſt unſpotted Piety, have ſpent whole Prentice-ſhips of Years, in the faithful, watchful, painful Service of the Churches, and have ſerved them Day and Night; with Prayers, with Tears, with Faſtings, with their moſt ſtudied Sermons, and Writings, and have never ſuch a Reputation with the Churches in Countreys afar off; yet if any *Wolf in Sheeps Cloathing* do come with a few Good Words among them, the *ſimple Souls* of many, will not only follow the *Wolf*, but on his Account bark at the *Shepherds*. This is a *Vanity, that I have ſeen under the Sun.* But the People had now this Reflection to make; That

ſince they had Sinfully ſleighted their moſt Serviceable *Paſtors*, who never craved after the *Riches* of this World, they ſhould by the juſt Judgment of God, be left unto ſuch an Infatuation, as to Enrich a *Craving Beggar*, with many Pounds of their Subſtance; which *Beggarly Stranger*, immediately apply'd himſelf, (not to inſtil the Fear of God, and Love of Chriſt, into your Children, O Injured People, as your *Paſtors* do, with a moſt indefatigable Application! but) to teach them, that Fornication and Adultery is no Sin, and to watch oppotunities of making them, like himſelf, the *Children of the Devil*. Repent, O Infatuated People; Repent, of what you have done; and let the Enſuing *Letter*, help you more throughly to conſider the occaſions for your doing ſo.

Religio Contaminata ad omnium Pertinet injuriam.

Boſton, 25 *d.*
10 *m.* 1699.

A LETTER,

Containing a Remarkable HISTORY,

OF AN

Impoſtor.

SIR,

I Am going to Entertain you, with a very ſurpiſing Story, by the Communication whereof, the Wiſdom, and Goodneſs, and Juſtice of *Heaven*, will become Obſervable to many Chriſtian Minds, and the *Devices* of *Hell* againſt the Intereſts of *Heaven*, be a little more fully underſtood, and by being underſtood, for the future prevented.

The

The Laſt Summer, in the very Ship that brought us Letters from our Friends in *England*, adviſing us of much Inconvenience ariſing to the Nonconformiſts from ill Fellows that pretended unto the *Preaching of the Glorious Goſpel*, there arrived unto us a man, that pretended the Name of *Samuel May*, and the character of a *Preacher*; having with him a Woman whom he call'd his *Wife*, but uſed her with an *Unwifely Crabbedneſs*, that gave Scandal to the people aboard. Albeit this man gave me much cauſe to be ſuſpicious, Leſt *he* might be one of thoſe whom our Letters complained of, yet my compaſſion towards a *Needy Stranger*, whom I ſaw, in ragged, wretched, forlorn circumſtances, cauſed me, among other wayes of being Helpful unto him, to ſeek that he might be twice Employ'd in, and Requited for Preaching at our *Private Meetings*; hoping thereby to have a little *Trial* of him. His *Plauſible Delivery*, preſently *Enchanted* abundance of Honeſt people, who thought *all was Gold that gliſtered*; but many Dayes paſſed not before I found ſeveral Things, which made me ſay, *I doubted, he was a Wolf in Sheeps Cloathing*. They that now ſay, They foſſow'd this man, becauſe I commended him, wrong me very much; for though 'tis not my manner *to ſpeak Ill* of men, till I *know* what

I

I *speak*, and that it is my Duty to *Speak*, yet I let fall words from the very firſt, that any Intelligent Hearer might ſee I had ſome *Fear* about him. The cauſe of that *Fear* was this; I found, That altho' 'tis no time of any *Perſecution*, that ſhould force any but Ill men to *Conceal themſelves*, yet he came Aboard the Veſſel under ſome *Concealment*, not profeſſing, nor ſuppoſed, for to be a *Miniſter*, but rather a *Mendicant*, until they had Sailed many Leagues. I found that he could mention the Name of no one *Miniſter* in *London*, with whom he durſt ſay, that he had any Acquaintance; Leſt, as it ſhould ſeem, he ſhould happen to mention one, with whom we ſhould be better Acquainted. I found, that he was unaccountably *Shye*, of giving us any ſatisfactory Account of his Original, his Education, his former circumſtances; by no means, could I get him, to tell me, in what Employment, he had ſpent the firſt ſix or ſeven and twenty years of his Life. What appear'd moſt *probable* (and ſince, more *probable*) was, That he was a Barber. *A blind Charity*, would ſtill have perſwaded me, to keep alive ſome *hope*, that *Folly* rather than *Deſign*, might ly at the bottom of his odd conduct; but I ſoon obſerved *ſomething* that made me ſay to ſome of my Intimate *Friends*, *That I fear'd, he*

would

should prove at last, a smutty, filthy, wanton Fellow. However, Things not being yet come to that maturity, I contented my self with calling to mind, the Rule which the Old *Briton* gave his Country-men, to discover whether *Austin* the *Monk* were a *Man of God* or no. Thought I, 'If this be an *Honest* 'man, he is an *Humble* man: If he be a '*Faithful Servant* of Christ, he'll plainly let 'his *Fellow Servants* know what he *is*, what 'he *intends*, what he *can* do, and humbly re'fer himself to *Them* for *Direction* and *Assist*'*ance*. We found nothing of This; but though he were wholly *Illiterate*, and not able, even to write a little Common English. (for instance, there were *Eighteen* horrid *false Spells*, and not *One point*, in one very short Note, that I received from him,) yet this proud *Thraso*, would in his Preaching, Ostentate skill in *Latin*, and in *Greek*, yea, and in *Hebrew*; But God left him to such *Folly* in his *pride*, that he frequently pronounced the *Exotic Words*, in a manner so ridiculous, as to render it plain, that he knew nothing of them: & in one of those two or three private *Preachments*, by which 'twas hop'd, we might have some Taste of his Faculties, he was under such an Infatuation, that he would needs give some *Hebrew* to us; but what he gave us, might be *Welch* or *Irish*, or the *Va-*

gabonds

gabonds Cant, for ought I knew; One Minister present, knew it was not in six or seven Languages, in all which himself had in various Writings Address'd the world, and others of his Hearers besides I, knew that there was no such *Hebrew* in the *Lexicon*. Who, but one *Hypocritically* disposed would have done so? If he were a *Shaver*, 'twas plain however, he was not the most *Cunning* in the world: In the mean time, 'twas a strange *Enchantment* upon the people, that they should after those things, put themselves *into* his Hands. But that his *Humility* might be the more notorious, I was presently informed, that the Blade with an *Arrogance* equal to his *Ignorance*, began to complain, That the *Ministers* of the Town, did not immediately Invite him, into their Pulpits; and upon his Complaints, many sinful people, (who have great cause to take no little shame unto themselves, for their causeless and shameless Iniquity) began to Defame the Ministers, with Slanderous Outcries, *That they were always incivil to Strangers*; and some could bestow this Comparison upon them, *That here was come, a better Workman than themselves, whom therefore they would not suffer to stay in the Town, if they could help it.* The Pastors of the Churches, being desirous to answer the Expectations of the people, as far as they

could, in Conſcience unto the people themſelves, and with credit unto the Evangelical Miniſtry, they ſent unto this man, in as Loving and as Tender Terms, as they could, a Meſſage to this purpoſe, *That they being ſincerely deſirous to Encourage him, in doing all the Good he ſhould be found Able to do, and he not having brought Satisfactory Teſtimonials into the Countrey with him, they pray'd a viſit from him, in which they would inform themſelves of his Abilities, for the Evangelical Miniſtry, and with all poſſible Eaſineſs proceed in their Examining and Adviſing of him.* To this Meſſage there was brought us from him, an Anſwer of this purport, *That he knew no Authority the Miniſters had to Enquire after him, and he was not bound to give them an account of himſelf*, and more to that Effect. The Miniſters had now done but the Duty of *Watchmen*, that would be found faithful to the Churches and Neighbours; but none of their *Watchfulneſs* could hinder many of the people, from the great fault of *running themſelves into Temptation*, by giddily running after the Inſtructions of a Fellow, that had *Shunn'd the Light, becauſe his Deeds were Evil.* The people, (whoſe *Charity* has been for the moſt part ſo *Exemplary*, that, methinks 'tis pitty it ſhould ever be *miſplaced* and *perverted*) ſome of them not only made a large

large Collection, to pay the *Passage* of this mischievous *Beggar*, and put *Money* into his Pocket; but also fill'd the Town, with so much Lying and Outrage against their faithful Ministers, for not counting such an *Unlettered Thing*, a fit Instructor for their Flocks, that I could not but think an hundred times of the people *Bewitched by Simon the Sorcerer*, and say, *That the greatest Blemish that ever befel the Town, was in the madness which they now discovered.* Who would have believed it, that in a Town so Illuminated as *Boston*, there should be any people of such a principle, *That if the greatest Villian in the World, should arrive a total Stranger among us, and for his True Name, give us perhaps only the first Syllable of his Name, and of a Barber turn a Preacher, the Pastors here must immediately Set him up in the publick Pulpits, or else the people justly load them with all the Calumnious Indignities that can be thought of?* However, the Ministers bore with patience all the Contempt which their Great Lord, saw the people foolishly cast upon them; and no two of them that ever I heard of, ever let fall one word, publickly to *Rebuke* their Folly; But, Syr, You shall see anon, Whether the Lord Himself will not *Rebuke* it; and make the people wish, *They had hearkened unto the Voice of their Teachers.*

We have in our Vicinity, a *Small Congregation* of *Anabaptists*, with whom I had alwayes Lived in a *Good Correspondence*. Forgive me the vanity, if I say, without judging it proper in this place, to *prove* what I say, That never any Minister so distant from their perswasion, carried it with more civility, and Affection towards persons of their perswasion, then I made it my Endeavour to do Because, I believed, there were Godly persons among them, I offered them, that if they should come (as they were likely) to have the Divine *Institutions* fail among themselves, I would freely accept them to Communion with my own Flock; and though they should be so scrupulous as to Turn their Backs as often as an *Infant* was *Baptised*, it should not be made an offence. This Offer I made them, I hope not out of a sinful Affectation to *Enlarge* my Flock; The most undeserved Favour of Heaven, has Employ'd my poor Services, in such Assemblies, that I have cause to Study how I may *Serve* them *better* before I go to get them *Larger*; but it was purely from a *Spirit of Charity*. Indeed, I had no Answer but this, *We look upon you, as an Unbaptized man, and therefore we cannot hold Communion with you*: But tho' this *New Comer* were in their Opinion, *An Unbaptised man*, yet they now took this opportunity, to

Invite

Invite Him, unto publick and constant Preaching every *Lords Day*, and *Lecture* besides, in their *Meeting-House*. Indeed, I must so far *Vindicate* these *Brethren*, as to tell you, That they do not seem to me, so much in *Fault*, as divers other people of my own profession, who Solicited them, and Instigated them, to Set up a Preacher for them, which their own *Pastors* had Refused; and it was on some Accounts a Time of *Temptation* with them. Nevertheless, I cannot wholly *Justify* this *Faulty Action*: And their Setting up such a Fellow, under all these Ill Circumstances, to be their *Publick Teacher*, look'd the worse, because they could not but see, that it nourished in his Numerous Proselytes, not only the sleight of a *Learned Ministry*, but also a disposition which ordinarily Inspired those that were proselyted by him, to become *Enemies* and *Revilers* of the *Ministers* of the Town. One of those *Ministers* beholding the *Spirit*, which this thing was done withal, freely told the *Anabaptists*, That *the Lord Jesus Christ, who saw what Principles they acted upon, would certainly make this very man, the Occasion of the greatest Confusion that ever befel them*: And at the same Time, saw cause to Foretel unto many others, *That the Devices of Satan in this matter were, for this man, to Engage many of our weaker People, to be his*

Hearers, by his not professing himself an Anabaptist, but when he had them fast, to about three or four months hence, to profess himself an Anabaptist, and lead them, who could say, whither? with him. Unto the man himself also, that person having signifyed his Dislike of what he had seen in him, Concluded, 'The '*Ministers* of this Town, who have by your 'means been greatly & ungratefully Reviled, 'will, I suppose, trouble themselves no far-'ther about you, Except some remarkable 'Occasion oblige them to it: but they will 'carry their *Flocks* to the Lord *Jesus Christ*, 'and they will carry their *Names* to the 'Lord *Jesus Christ*, and they will carry *You* 'also unto the Lord *Jesus Christ*; but I believe, 'the *Consequence* of This, will very speedily 'be unto *You*, very uncomfortable. He, and his Creatures, went on filling the Town with *Slander*, in Instances, which I desire to *Forgive* and *Forget*: Only one of them, I will mention, because they made more than ordinary Noise about it. Having too just cause to fear, that this Insolent Fellow, would *Steal* an Admission to the *Lords Table*, in my own Church, I went unto his House, on purpose to *Forbid* him from it; but they spread a story over the Town, that I came to *Invite* him to it. Many Dayes did not now pass, before I did by a singular Accident,

cident, meet with a Book of Dr. *Samuel Boltons*, wherein there is a Diſcourſe about, *The Royalties of Faith*; and this Diſcourſe, to my Surpriſe, I found ſo very much the ſame, with what I had my ſelf heard this man deliver, that I thought the two Boyes in *Plautus*, were not more alike, - *Dixitque ſibi ſua Cœcio, Fuerat.* I ſent for many other of the Hearers, who had better *Memories* than my ſelf, and offered them, to give them a conſiderable Price for every Sentence they could call to mind, in their Dr. *Samuel May's* Diſcourſe, that I could not ſhow them in my Dr. *Samuel Boltons*; which offer they ſome of them took, but could not find *One Sentence* for their Advantage: The Exact Agreement, between *Samuel* the *Doctor*, and *Sam* the *Dunce*, was a diverting Surprize to all that ſaw it. Hereupon, a Miniſter of the Town, viſited the man himſelf, and profered him a *Piece of Eight*, for every material Sentence, that he could produce, of his own Diſcourſe, about, *The Royalties of Faith*, which could not be produced from the *Author*, and in the *Order*, and with his *Flouriſhes*, and *Expreſſions*, that were moſt *Peculiar*; and he ſet before him the *Cheat* and the *Crime*, that there is in Preaching *Stollen Sermons*. Indeed, becauſe the man had no *Academical* Education (Except one ſhould ſuppoſe at *Samorgan*, a cer-

tain famous Academy in *Lithuania*,) it was to no purpose, to quote unto him the saying of *Synesius*, *Magis impium esse mortuorum Lucubrationes, quam vestes furari*; but I did in *Plain English* tell him the Dishonesty of the matter. He not only Denyed, that ever he had us'd or seen any of Dr. *Boltons* works, (though he was also detected of *Stealing* Three or Four more Sermons, out of this very Book!) but he also called the Great and Dreadful God to Witness, *That the Discourse he delivered, was the pure effect of his own Industry and Invention*; adding, That he had no other way to give Satisfaction, but by Preaching on any Text, that Minister should give him. The Minister told him, That he was astonished at his horrid *Wickedness* and *Atheism*, and that if he were to be believed in this thing, all *Humane Proof* of any thing must come to an End. He proceeded; That he had out-gone, all the *Cheats* that ever had appear'd among us, for being so hardened in *Impiety* and *Stupidity*, as to *Deny* a Fact, wherein he was as plainly Detected, as ever any *Theef*, that was taken with the *Stolen Goods* about him. And he concluded; *Miserable Man*, Do you ask me for a *Text* to Preach upon? I have a *Text*, more than one, for you, to Think upon. Go Preach, if you dare to do it, upon that Text, Psal. 50. 17.

He that telleth Lies, ſhall not tarry in my ſight. Preach, if you dare to do it, upon that Text, Pſal. 50. 16. *Unto the Wicked God ſaith, what haſt thou to do, to declare my Statutes?* Preach, if you dare to do it, upon that Text, Rev. 21. 8. *All Lyars ſhall have their Part in the Lake.* And if you dare carry on your *Impiety* ſo far, Preach upon that Text, Rev. 2. 23. *All the Churches ſhall know, that I ſearch the Reins and the Hearts.* But let me faithfully and Solemnly, and as a *Miniſter* of *God*, and as one ſpeaking to you in the Name of *God*, and in the Fear of *God*, Admoniſh you to *Repent* of your Wickedneſs. I doubt, you will not *Repent*, and therefore, I tell you, *I am verily perſwaded, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who knowes, your Secret Wickedneſs will bring it out. I verily Believe, That in your Detection, the Glorious Lord* **Jeſus Chriſt, will make all the Churches to know, that He ſearches the Reins and the Hearts** *of the Children of men. Remember, I told you ſo, and that many Months will not paſs, before this come to paſs: It may be, I may Live to ſee it.* He Trembled & Quiver'd, when the Miniſter ſpoke theſe things unto him; yet he Repented not, but in a few Hours, he ſet the people a Railing at that Miniſter, in many Corners of the Town, for, *Abuſing a Precious, Godly, Worthy*

man,

men. Some Adviſed, the *Arreſting* of that Miniſter, in *Great Actions*, for *Defaming* of this *Excellent Perſon*; And others had the *Fear of God*, ſo little in Exerciſe with them, as to cry out, *That if this man had been guilty of all that was charg'd on him, yet for that Miniſter to ſpeak ſuch Things to him, was as great an offence as his.*

I had reaſon, to deſire, That the *Truth* might now appear, a little more irrefragably; and therefore I went unto the Officers of the *Anabaptiſt* Church, declaring, *That I apprehended my ſelf able to convict the man whom they Employ'd as a Publick Teacher among them, of being a Cheat, and of having horribly Ly'd againſt his Conſcience, in ſeveral repeated and Notorious Inſtances; and that I deſired on my own behalf, and on the behalf of the other Miniſters in the Town, that they would appoint a place, the next week, where I might prove my Charge to his Face, and they ſhould be Judges of it.* I could not have Imagined it; But the Church being informed of my Demand, immediately Renewed (as I am told) their *Call* unto him, to continue his *Preaching* among them; and by their *Miniſter* and *Another*, there was an Anſwer of this Importance brought unto me, *That inaſmuch as this man was not a Member of their Church, they did not apprehend themſelves concerned, to take any notice*

of

of what I had offered. Whereto my Reply was, *Well, I have done my Duty, and I hope, you have considered, Whether it will be for Christ's Honour, or for your own, to Employ a man, as a Publick Preacher, against whom such a Charge is urg'd, and may be prov'd, if you will but hear it.* And thought I, How much will Christians act besides themselves, when *Led into Temptation*! From this Time, even from *September*, (I think) to *December*, I concern'd my self no further: being satisfied, that it would not be long before the Lord Jesus Christ, who saw how impiously this man *mocked* Him, would *Search him out*, and cloath with perpetual Confusion, those that would persist in Assisting such a *Mocker* of Heaven. One would have thought that considerate people after this warning would have been as much afraid of seeing such a *Spectre* in a *Pulpit*, as if he had been the *Holder forth*, which they say, sometimes appears in the *Coper Mines* of *Sueden*. But many people, instead of taking the warning, went on still, under the Influences of this *Ignis Fatuus*, to treat me (and much better men) with Numberless & Furious Abuses for giving it; and with a *practical Commentary* upon the Distempers mentioned in the Beginning of the first Epistle to the *Corinthians*. I praise the Lord, for His making me unwilling to

Re-

Remember them, and I pray *Him* to cast them out of His *Remembrance*. At last the malice went so far, that they began to throw into my House, insolent, bitter, bloody *Libels*, wherein, albeit the nameless Writer Confess *A great Esteem for me, for my moderate Spirit towards them that differ from me*, yet they now in most venemous Terms of Rage, flew upon me for my *Reviling an Eminent Worthy Stranger*, (as they expres it) and *Persecuting* one who had *the Root of the matter in him*, and one who had now the Liberty of a more *Unstained Pulpit*, than any of those which had been deny'd him. All these, and many more such things wherein I *heard the Defaming of many*, I bore, I hope, I may say, *Silently*, and *Patiently*, & it was a great Fault in me, if not *Prayerfully*: & if I did not set my self, to consider, *What Holy Lessons were to be Learnt out of such Temptations*: In which *Lessons* I should have been sufficiently *Requited Good*, for the *Cursing* of all the *Shimei's* in the Town. But, thought I, what *Spirit* possesses these Touchy Folks, that they can't let me be quiet? I do nothing to Disquiet them: Or, Does that *Spirit* see, that his *Time* is but *Short*, e're the Displeasure of Heaven, put this *Boutefeu* and his Disciples, to the Blush, which had been foretold unto them? Truly; Syr, I had no Remedy,

medy, but humbly to carry my Complaints unto the Lord, who knew my Faithfulness.

This *Evil Worker* now apply'd himself unto the *Anabaptists*, with private Intimations, That for four or five years, he had been convinced in his Conscience, that *their way* was the *Right way*, and that he was now in some Trouble of Conscience for his having Delay'd so long to Declare himself, but it should not now be long before he did. When Things were now become just Ripe, for the *Devices* of *Satan*, to take effect; behold, how the Wonderful Providence of Heaven defeated them! *The Lord sent an Evil Spirit*, between this man and the *Anabaptists* that had adhered unto him. Even *They* began to find their *Eminent Worthy Stranger*, Guilty of such *Lying*, and such *Lewdness*, and such Damnable *Coveteousness*, (especially, when upon their not carrying Money to him, on a Lords-Day, wherein he Preached not, he flew out as I am told, like a *Dragon*, spitting this among other *Fire*, at them, *I see, no longer* Pipe, *no longer Dance!*) that they came to fear, he was a *Cheat*, and wished, they had never seen him. While things were thus operating, the Guilty Fellow having bubbled the silly Neighbours of incredible scores of Pounds, and thinking that the Answers of my Letters to *Europe* about him were not far off, all on the

sudden,

ſudden, he will be gone; and none of the charming offers that were made him, if he would continue, could procure his continuance any longer in the Countrey. He that had often told us, his coming from *England*, was with a purpoſe to ſee his Uncle in *Virginia*, whom it may be, no man elſe ever ſaw, now without one look towards *Virginia*, Ships himſelf to Return for *England*. But, God will no longer be *mocked*!

A Vertuous and Laudable Young Gentleman, in the Neighbourhood, Lets fall a word unto one of his Friends, *That he was informed, this man had uſed ſome uncivil carriage towards a Woman that belonged unto one of the Churches in the Town.* Some of the Hearers go and complain, that this Gentleman ſaid, *The man had got ſuch a Woman with Child*, whereupon ſome of the mans Friends began to be obſtreperous. The Ingenuous Young Gentleman, was too well beloved, by all that knew his conſtant piety, to be ſuſpected of ſpeaking a *Falſhood*; and the Trouble on the minds of his Friends for him, immediately made ſeveral Diſcreet and Honeſt *Women*, to ſpeak but more plainly, how able *They* were to Aſſert the Truth, of what *he* had really ſpoken. Horrid Things began to be muttered about this Wretch, for divers weeks before; and no doubt, the Apprehenſion of their ta-

king

king Air, haſtened his Flight: but a modeſt Woman, eſpecially if ſhe don't know of any one elſe, to ſuſtain with her the weight of the Teſtimony, appears with no ſmall Reluctancy to teſtify an affront offered unto her. It had been Remark'd by ſome, That this Villian, though in *Publick Prayer* he were extraordinarily Devout, yet he had a ſtrange Indiſpoſition to *Private Prayer*. And there was enough to render *Prayer* uneaſy to his Guilty Soul; for while he was *Feaſting* with the Abuſed Neighbours, *he had Eyes full of Adultery, that could not ceaſe from Sin.* The Burning Jealouſie of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, will now bring out the Villany of this man, and **Make all the Churches to know that He ſearches the Reins and the Hearts.** The *Hypocrite* had made ſuch a ſhow of zeal, in his performances on the *Stage*, that every one ſaid, *This man muſt be either a great Saint, or a great Rogue*; and as to one of theſe, I queſtion, whether a *greater* ever came into this Land.

Sir, I durſt not blot my paper, with all the Abominable Things, that are teſtified upon *Oath*, againſt this *Eminent Worthy Stranger*. But the Sum of the Teſtimonies, depoſed upon *Oath*, before the Magiſtrate, *Decemb.* 7. 1699. by ſeveral Women of unblemiſh'd Reputation, is, 'That he would often watch Opportunities

'tunities of getting them alone, and then
'would often affront them with Lewd, Vi
'and Lascivious Carriages, which rendred
'a dangerous Thing to be alone with him
'and abundantly assured them, that he was
'great *Rogue*, and that, if they had been fo
'his Turn, he would have stuck at no Villa
'ny towards them. That he would also tal
'at a vile rate, and among other things
'he would plead, *That there was no Sin*
'*Adultery*.

The Testimonies after This, increased on
our Hands, which assured us, That on
Saturday, with his *Bible* in his Hands, he
could sollicit Young Women to Wantonness
Yea, and Endeavour to Intoxicate them, tha
he might pursue his vile Purposes upon them.
Yea, That when he heard of a Young Wo
man affected with his *Ministry*, he would
find her out, and spend several Hours to
gether in rude actions and speeches, to her,
and urging her to Ly with him, which he
said, was *no Sin*, for *David* and *Solomon* did
as much; and adding, *They need not fear*
being with Child by him, for none ever were so.
More of this prodigious *Devillism* was testi-
fyed against this *Eminent Worthy Stranger*;
and other horrid stuff begins to come to
Light, and I suppose would soon be *found*, if
sought for: but I abhor to rake any further
in such a *Dunghill*.

They

They that fill'd the Town with other Impiety, by setting up this *Filthy Dreamer*, have now a Time to Admire the Favour of Heaven, (more than their own *prudence*) That there was not Set up a Congregation of *Nicolaitans*, in the Town, and that the Young People, have not been debauched into fearful Whoredomes, and Led away to the *Unclean Spirit*, like the *Transylvanian* Children, which danced after the Pied Piper, into the Cave of *Hamelen*.

But I have observed, That whereas grievous *Times of Temptation* are ever now and then, sent upon our *Churches*, if the Servants of the Lord Jesus Christ can, for a while bear to be *buffeted* by the Foolish Rage of those *Times*, and apply themselves to Humble *Prayer*, and *Faith*, before the Great Lord, who holds the *Tempter* in a Chain, and if instead of answering to *Reviling* with *Reviling*, they are only quickened unto more of *Holiness*, and *Usefulness*, the *Times* do not prove *Dayes of Temptation*, but meer *Hours of Temptation*; and *Nubeculæ cito transituræ*, presently at an end. And so it was, in the *Storm of Temptation*, which by *Satan*, was now Raised in our Neighbourhood.

It has in some former years commonly happened unto me, That when I visited in the way of my *Pastoral Duty*, persons I

 found

seſſed with Evil Spirit, the perſons though they knew every one elſe in the room, yet through the unaccountable Operation of the *Evil Spirit* upon their Eyes, I muſt appear ſo Dirty, ſo Ugly, ſo *Diſguiſed* unto them, that they could have no knowledge of me. I have a thouſand times thought, That the Lord ordered This for ſome Intimation unto me, that when *Times of Temptation* come, wherein *Evil Spirits* have as much Operation on the *Minds* of many people, as they have upon the *Eyes* of *Energumens*, a Miniſter of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that will be faithful unto His Intereſts, muſt look to be all over *Diſguiſed*, by miſrepreſentations, unto the *Minds* of them that are under the power of *Temptation*. A Miniſter ſhall ſtrictly Impoſe that *Law of Kindneſs* upon his *Lips*, to ſpeak not one Intemperate or Injurious *Word*, on the greateſt provocation; and yet be Repreſented, as a man full of *Bitterneſs*. He ſhall be always *Deviſing Things* to Relieve the miſerable, and Spend more than many others do imagine poſſible to be ſpent in *Pious Uſes*, and ſcorn to take many *Little Gains*, that might lawfully be taken, and yet they ſhall cry out of him, for *Unchariableneſs* and *Incivility*. He ſhall never once in his Life, aſk a *Salary* from his Flock,

Flock, nor agree with them about a *Salary*, nor have his Dependance on the *Lord's Day Collections* for a *Salary*, nor be in any Likelihood of seeing the *Lord's Day Collections* to fail; and yet they shall flout at him, as one *afraid of Losing his Contribution*. A Minister shall be of such a Temper, that perceiving a considerable and valuable part of his Flock, to put themselves unto a deal of Trouble to attend upon his Ministry (by passing a large Ferry every *Lord's Day*,) he shall one year after another call upon those Beloved Christians, to Leave his Ministry, and set up a *New Church* by themselves, and set a Worthy Pastor over them, to support whom, he shall offer to contribute not a little, and part with some of his own *Salary*; and yet this Minister shall be represented as *Afraid of not being able to Support his Hearers*. He shall---But I don't love to mention these Things; The Lord of Heaven, Teach us by these Things, to *Long for Heaven*, and even while we are on *Earth*, to *Live in Heaven*.

You will doubtless make some Advantage to your Holy Thoughts from this Remarkable Story; and my other Neighbours will make, I hope, at least this Advantage from it, That if another *Barber*, instead of this other Courses, that bring so

many to *Tyburn*, come over from *London* hither, to recruit his *Broken Fortunes* by the *Blasphemies* of *Stollen Sermons*, plausibly and fervently delivered, the people have not Learnt a little more Wit, than to pamper such a Fellow with their plentiful Cookery, and Equip him with scores of Pounds in his Pocket, and send him to *London* again, to Laugh at the Folly of them that will permit themselves to be so Abused.

'Tis time for me now, to Subscribe my self, (inasmuch as I am not Writing a *Libel*)

Sir,

Your Sincere Servant,

Cotton Mather.

POSTSCRIPT

Postscript.

THE Countrey has been so fill'd with *Lyes*, on the occasion of the Things which have been *truly* Represented in this my *Letter*, that I suppose I shall publish the *Letter* unto the Countrey. And if any blame the Publication, I think they will forget, *What is required in the Ninth Commandment*: and I fear, they will but Expose themselves unto the censures of Wise and Good men, as the Friends of this *Impostor*, not out of *Charity* (as diverse worthy Christians before they knew him, were) but from a principle of *Impiety* and *Malignity*. Among the ancient *Israelites* when a *False Prophet*, or an *Unclean Priest*, was found, every man had a *Commission*, in the presence of *Ten men*, to Execute the *Law* upon him, (as *Grotius* tells us,) *Non Expectato Judice*. But when one of those Wretches received his punishment, it was the Custom, *That a Letter concerning it, should be dispatch'd unto all the Cities of Israel.* As for this *Unclean Prophet*, the *Letter* it self, *that is now dispatch'd unto all the Churches*, is the chief *punishment* hitherto inflicted on him.

Something to be Known, by all the Churches.

OR,

Short Remarks upon the Remarkable Dispensations of the Lord JESUS CHRIST, unto His Churches, discovering Secret Offendors and Impostors, among them.

At Boston Lecture, 14. d. 10. m. 1692.

REV. II. 23.

All the Churches shall know, that I am He, who Searches the Reins and the Hearts.

THE *Vilest* of Creatures, do sometimes creep into the purest of *Churches*. Yea, some that set up for Zealous *Teachers* of *Godliness*, are *Secretly* the most *Ungodly* Wretches in the World. Our Lord Jesus Christ, in His Holy and

and Wondrous Providence often detects these *Vaſal Hypocrites*. But when ſuch *Hypocrites* are detected, He ſo orders the Detection, that *His Churches*, not only *Should*, but *Shall* take Notice of it.

There was at *Thyatira*, One that ſet up for a *Teacher*, and was marvellouſly Approved, Admired, and Followed, by many of the People; at whoſe *Giddineſs* the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, was therefore Exceedingly offended. But this *Teacher* was in the Iſſue proved an Horrid, Filthy, *Laſcivious Wretch*, and fell under the dreadful Judgments of God. Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt now declares the *Uſe*, that He will have to be made of ſuch a matter; And His *Doctrine* unto us, is This.

The Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Son of God, who Searches the Reins and the Hearts of men, will by wonderful Diſpenſations of His Providence, make all the Churches to Know, that He is indeed an Heart-Searching Lord.

It is from hence, A CASE to be now diſcourſed on.

What are the Apprehenſions, and what the Diſpoſitions, with which the Churches of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, are to Conſider Him, Searching the Reins and the Hearts of men?

1. The *Churches* of the Lord Jesus Christ should *know*, That He is very GOD, and the *Son of God*. Who is it that saith, *All the Churches shall know, that I am He, who Searches the Reins and the Hearts!* We find it here; *These Things saith the Son of God.* It is the prerogative of *God* alone, to *Search the Reins and the Hearts.* To say, *I am He that Searches the Reins and the Hearts*; tis no Language for the Mouth of a Creature. It was said, in Jer. 17. 10. *The Heart, who can know it? ... I JEHOVAH, Search the Heart, I Try the Reins.* When our Lord Jesus Christ says, *I am He that Searches the Reins and the Hearts*, He alludes unto that very Oracle; tis as much as if He had said, *I am the Lord JEHOVAH.* That we read in Jer. 11. 20. *O Lord of Hosts, who tryest the Reins and the Heart.* We cannot be sensible, That our Lord Messiah *Tryes the Reins and the Hearts*, if we are not sensible, that He is, *The Lord of Hosts.* The *Incommunicable Attributes* of *God*, are ascribed unto our Lord Jesus Christ. The *Godhead* of our Lord, is fully asserted, in the Things thus ascribed unto Him. And this *All-knowledge*, to be a Καρδιογνωστης, one that *Knows the Heart*, is one of those *Incommunicable Attributes.* Tis the peculiar *Glory* of *God*, in 1 King. 8. 39. *Thou, even Thou only, knowest the Hearts of all the Children of men.* But, this *Glory* belongs unto

our

our Lord Jesus Christ, the *Lord of Glory*. The *Godhead* of our Lord Jesus Christ, is then to be Known and Own'd in all His Churches. Indeed, they are no *True Churches*, which do not own the *Godhead* of our Lord Jesus Christ. If this *Confession of Faith*, be not laid in the Foundation of *Churches*, they are not *Founded upon a Rock*, and the *Gates of Hell*, will *prevail against them*.

The *Scriptures* of God, have called our Lord JESUS CHRIST, Expresly, *The True God*, and, *The Great God*, and, *God over all*. And the *Churches* of God, must accordingly acknowledge Him. This is indeed a *Great Mystery*; but with every *Godly* man, it is a *Mystery* beyond all *Controversy*, That our Lord Jesus Christ is, [*1 Tim. 3. 16.*] *God manifest in Flesh*. Yes, The *New Testament* speaks at this rate, will a *Few* say; But give me the *Old Testament*; where will you find any such passage in the *Old Testament*. Well, *To the Old Testament thou hast Appealed*; *Thither thou shalt Go*! If the *Messiah* were not *God*, why did *Job* say, *In my Flesh I shall see God*? I can find you a *Jewish Rabbi*, who gathers from hence, *That the Word of God, shall one Day take Flesh in a Woman*. Or, if this be not plain enough, I am sure, tis plain in Psal. 45. 6, 7. *Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever*: *God, thy God hath anointed thee*. 'Tis plain, in

Isa.

Isa. 9. 6. *To us a Child is born, to us a Son is given, His Name shall be called, God, the Mighty.* We are very certain, That the Name JEHOVAH, is peculiar to *God* alone; yet even this peculiar Name, is given to the *Messiah*, (who is therefore called, *He which was, and is, and is to come:*) You have it, in Zech. 12. 10. JEHOVAH sayes, *They shall Look on me whom they have pierced*; It may be there is nothing more worthy of Note in all the *Jewish Talmuds*, than that Note on this Text, *Peace be on him, who sayes, That these things are to be said of Messiah.* Several of the *Rabbins* own, That the *Messiah* is meant, when tis said, *JEHOVAH shall build up Jerusalem.* Thus when we read in Jer. 33. 16. *This is the Name whereby He shall be called, JEHOVAH our Righteousness*: And in Jer. 33. 16. *He that shall call it, is, JEHOVAH our Righteousness*: The Ancient *Jews* themselves Expound it of the *Messiah*: They ask, *What shall the Messiah be called?* They Reply, *The Eternal JEHOVAH.* The Objection which the Modern *Jews* make against this most comfortable Article of our Creed, is, That the *Messiah* is *Man*, and therefore cannot be *God*. But let them Answer one Question; Is not the Second person in *God* able to *Unite a Man* unto Himself? They dare not say, but *God* is able to do such a Thing. And there is a Sentence in the Bible,

Bible, which Expressly affirms, That there should be a *Man* in the World, who should be *God*, as well as *Man*. You have it, in Zech. 13. 7. *Awake, O Sword, against the Man, that is my Equal, saith* JEHOVAH, *the Lord of Hosts*. There was a *Man*, whom the Jewes did Stab with a *Sword*; but of this *Man* 'tis said, *He is an equal to the Lord of Hosts*; He must therefore be *God* as well as *Man*.

The *Churches* of the Lord Jesus Christ, must preserve this *Faith* among them: 'tis their very *Life*; all their *Hope*, and all their *Joy*, is Enwrapped in it. But the *Faith* of our Lords *Deity*, cannot be preserved, without the *Faith* of the *Trinity*. We don't know *God*, if we don't know Him as *One God in Three Subsistences*. It is therefore maintained by some Learned Christians, *That the God of the Synagogue, is not the God of* Abraham, *and* Isaac, *and* Jacob. The *Three Subsistences* are so Exhibited unto us; in 1 Joh. 5. 7. *The Father, the Word, and the Spirit*; and in Psal. 33. 6. *The Lord, and the Word of the Lord, and the Spirit of the Lord*. Now, in Believing the *Trinity*, the *Churches* of the Lord Jesus Christ, must particularly Believe, That their Lord is the *Son of God*. That *person* in God, which is usually called, by the Name of, *The Word*, is also called by the Name of, *The Son*. Why? Because

Because He proceeds from the *Father*, by an unutterable, an Inconceivable, an Eternal *Generation*. The Jews have a Tradition, that when the *Messiah* comes, He will tell us the *Right Name* of the Eternal God; He has done it, in Mat. 28. 19. *His Name* is, *The Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.*

Except the *Churches*, thus acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ, as the *Son of God*, they cannot call *God* their *Father*, they cannot propose to be themselves by *Adoption*, the *Children of God.*

II. The *Churches* of the Lord Jesus Christ, should *Know*, That the Lord Jesus Christ has an *Exact Knowledge* of all men, and of all that is in *Men*: More particularly;

We are to *know*, That the most *Hidden* and *Secret*, Things are *known* unto the Lord Jesus Christ. 'Tis the Voice of our Lord Jesus Christ, whom without falling into the *Ubiquitarian* Error, we must call our *Omnipresent* Lord, in Jer. 23. 24. *Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him? saith the Lord.* *Reins* and *Hearts* are things altogether *Out of sight.* But the Things that are most *Out of sight*, are *Seen* by the Lord Jesus Christ. *Men* may see the *Face* of other men; but the Lord Jesus Christ sees the very *Reins* and *Hearts* of all men; there is nothing to be *Hidden* from him, tho' it be never so *secret.*

Be

Be it *Known* among the *Churches*, That (Job 34. 21, 22.) *His Eyes are upon the ways of man, and he sees all his goings; Neither is there any Darkness nor Shadow of Death, where the Workers of Iniquity may hide themselves.*

Again; We are to *Know*, That all our *Thoughts*, and the very *Thoughts* of all men, are fully *known* unto our Lord Jesus Christ. Let our *Minds* be constantly kept Awake, by that word of our Lord, in Ezek. 11. 5. *Thus saith the Lord, I know the things that come into your mind, every one of them.* The *Reins* and the *Hearts* of men, are the *Forge* wherein their *Thoughts* are minted. *The Thoughts are free*, we say; but they are not *free*, either from the *Law*, or from the *View*, of our Lord Jesus Christ. There are neither *Good Thoughts*, nor *Ill Thoughts* in the Souls of any men, but our Lord Jesus Christ is infallibly acquainted with them; He will *Require* the one, and *Revenge* the other. The Scribes of Old, were not the only persons, of whom it might be said, *The Lord knew their Thoughts.* No, Let it be *known* and said, by every man in all the *Churches*, [Psal. 139. 2.] *Lord, Thou knowest my Thoughts afar off.*

Moreover; We are to *know*, That the most *Secret Conditions* of men are *known* to our Lord Jesus Christ. The *Interiour*, and *Spiritual* State of men, the Lord Jesus Christ *knows* what it is. 'Tis said, *He Tries the Reins and*

the Hearts: How? As men *Try Metals*, whether they be *Counterfeit* or no. Our Lord Jesus Christ *Knows* all the Members in His *Churches*; which of them are *Sons of Zion comparable to fine Gold*, and which of them are *base Metals*, only *guilt* over with Gold. Many a man does not *know himself*; but there is no man whom the Lord Jesus Christ *knows not*. If there be *Sincerity* in the Soul, the Lord Jesus Christ *knows* the *Sincerity*. Hence an Embassador of God, that had been greatly *Defamed*, among those who did not *know* him, cheerfully made his Appeal to his Heavenly Lord, in Jer. 20. 12. *O Lord of Hosts, who triest the Righteous, and seest the Reins and the Heart, unto thee I have opened my cause.* There is no where an *Israelite indeed* but whom our Lord Jesus Christ may not say, *I have seen that man*! If there be *Hypocrisy* in the Soul, the Lord Jesus Christ *knows* the *Hypocrisy*. Hence, when there were some, who seem'd such *Strict Preachers*, that every one said of them, *They are either great Saints, or great Villains*, our Lord Jesus Christ so *knew* them, that He could say what they were; in Mat. 23. 27, 28. *Hypocrites, Ye are like unto whited Sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but are within full of all uncleanness: Ye appear outwardly Righteous unto men, but within ye are full of Hypocrisy and Iniquity.* Hypocrisy

may carry a very fair Show of *Sincerity*. The Devil may appear as an *Angel of Light*: And the *Children* of the *Devil*, may be so like the *Children* of *God*, *Pray* so like them, and *Speak* so like them, and *Look* so like them, that no man may *know* them asunder. Yea, but they are *known* to the Lord Jesus Christ, every man of them all!

Furthermore; We are to *know*, That the most *Secret Intentions* of men are *known* unto the Lord Jesus Christ. The *Counsels* of men, these may have the *Reins* and the *Hearts*, for the *Seat* of them. Our Lord Jesus Christ *knows* all that is in them; that is to say, All that we Consult, and Resolve without selves. If we have any *Holy purposes* to Glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, and Edify His people, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself *knows* all that we have purposed. When there was in the *Heart* of a Good man, a Design to do a Service for the House of God, we read, in 1 King 8. 18. *The Lord said unto him, Whereas it was in thy Heart, thou didst well in that it was in thy Heart.* And if there are any *Wicked purposes*, that men have taken up within themselves, what is *purposed* cannot be so *concealed*, but the Lord Jesus Christ will *know* it all. 'Tis no rare thing, for men to *pretend* one thing, and *intend* another; but the Lord Jesus Christ sees through all *pretensions*. We

read,

read, in 1 Thes. 2. 3, 4, 5. *Our Exhortation was not of Deceit, nor of Uncleanness, —we speak not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our Hearts, —neither used we at any time a cloak of Covetousness, God is witness.* There were those that *Preached* the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and yet they drove a filthy Trade of *Uncleanness* and *Covetousness*, in what they did: Now, saies the Apostle, the Lord Jesus Christ, who *tries our Hearts*, He *knows*, who did, and who did not so: There is no putting a *Trick* upon the Lord Jesus Christ; it is said of Him, *He weighs the Spirits of men.*

Yet once more; We are to *know*, That the most *Secret Affections* of men are *known* unto the Lord Jesus Christ. In the *Reins* and the *Hearts* of men, do their *Affections* operate. Our Lord Jesus Christ *knows*, how the Souls of men do *Stand Affected*. Have we any *Desires*? The Lord Jesus Christ *knows* them all. We may say with him, in Psal. 38. 9. *Lord, All my Desire is before thee.* Have we any *Sorrows*? The Lord Jesus Christ *knows* them all. It was said by Him, in Exod. 3. 7. *I have heard their cry, I know their Sorrows.* Do we *Love* the Lord Jesus Christ? Our *Love* is not *unknown* unto the Lord whom we *Love*. It may be said, [*Joh.* 21. 17.] *Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest*

knowest that I love thee. If *Carnal Affections* [even those of the very *Reins*] are flaming and raging within us, they are *known* to Him that is, *The God of the Spirits of all Flesh.* And if our *Affections are set upon the Things that are above*, where our Lord Jesus Christ is, they are *known* unto the Lord, that we have chosen for the Object of them.

Yea, Finally; The *Knowledge* which our Lord Jesus Christ hath of all these Things is a very *Exact* and *Perfect Knowledge.* 'Tis said, *He Searches the Reins and the Hearts.* The *Exactness* of the *Knowledge*, is implied in the Expression of *Searching.* Our Lord Jesus Christ *Searches* to the *Bottom* of all things. [See Heb. 4. 12, 13.] We are therefore informed concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, *He hath Eyes like a Flame of Fire.* He needs no other *Light*, but His own *Eyes*, to discover the most *Secret* Things in the World. There is nothing so *Secret*, but the *Eyes* of the Lord Jesus Christ, will penetrate like swift Lightning, into the Bowels of it. When the Wretches of old, heaped their Ludibrious and Abusive Treats upon our Lord Jesus Christ, one Abuse with which they treated Him was, *They Blindfolded Him*, as they imagined. Poor Fools! To imagine, that they could extinguish or intercept the *Sight* of Him that *made the Eye!* A little *Atom*, as well might put out the *Sun!* Be it

known unto you, O ye *Churches* of the Lord; There is nothing *unknown* unto your Glorious Lord.

III. When the *Wonderful Providence* of the Lord Jesus Christ, by Discovering *Secret Sinners* in His *Churches*, makes it Evident, that He *Searches the Reins and the Hearts of men*, it becomes the *Churches*, to take much Notice of that *Wonderful Providence*. When are the *Churches* to *know*, That the Lord Jesus Christ *Searches the Reins and the Hearts of men*? They are *Then* especially to *Know* it, when the Lord Jesus Christ, by strange Discoveries of *Cheats* in His *Churches*, gives a Demonstration thereof. But then, the *Knowledge* that the *Churches* are to have, implies, that they take due *Notice*, a *Serious* Notice, and an *Awful* Notice of it.

At the *Great Day of Judgment* indeed, the Lord Jesus Christ will most Eminently make all the *Churches* to *Know*, that He *Searches the Reins and the Hearts of men*. There will a Day come, (the Day of our True *Davids Kingdom*, the Day wherein the *Creation* shall be delivered from the *Vanity* now upon it.) When, as we are told, in Eccl. 12. 14. *God will bring every Work into Judgment, with every Secret Thing, whether it be Good, or whether it be Evil.* Not only will all the *Churches* that ever

ever were found among mankind, then find that the Lord Jesus Christ *Searches the Reins and Hearts of men*, but *all mankind* will be with all possible Solemnity convinced of it. In that Illustrious Day of God, when *God shall Judge the Secrets of men by Jesus Christ*, and when *God will bring to Light the Hidden Works of Darkness*,

Cunctaque Cunctorum Cunctis arcana patebunt;

Heaven and Earth shall then *know*, and it shall be terribly proclaimed from the *Rising of the Sun to the Setting thereof*, and as far as the Trumpet of an Archangel can sound the Proclamation, *That every thing is known unto our Great Lord Redeemer.*

But before that *Last*, and *Great*, and *Notable Day of the Lord*, there do oftentimes fall out, most amazing Things, to show the *Churches*, That the Lord Jesus Christ *Searches the Reins and Hearts* of the Children of men. The Word of the Lord Jesus Christ, hath particularly Cautioned us, against being too *Quick* and *Rash* in receiving men as *Ministers* of the Gospel, for fear, lest it quickly appear that those pretended *Ministers*, are secretly Rotten, Profane, Unclean Creatures; and then we *partake* in the Guilt of the *Miscarriages* that are found chargeable upon those

Intruded *Ministers*: Now, saies the Apostle, 1 Tim. 5. 22, 24. *Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other mens Sins: some mens sins are open before-hand, going before to Judgment, and some, they follow after*: The *Sins* of some *Candidates* for the *Ministry*, are not open before *Trial* and *Judgment* is past upon them, and they are judg'd fit for *Ordination*, but however it won't be long before their *Sins* do break out, unto the Astonishment of all the *Churches*, that were too *sudden* in setting of them up.

Consider of it, O ye *Churches* of the Lord.

First; The *Wonderful Providence* of the Lord Jesus Christ, in discovering of *Secret Sinners*, does plainly discover, that He *Searches* the most *Secret Sins*, in the *Reins* and *Hearts* of men. By various and curious and exquisite *Methods*, does the *Wonderful Providence* of the Lord Jesus Christ, bring about the Discovery of *Secret Sinners*. And those *Methods* of *Providence* do confirm This; That our Lord Jesus Christ *knows* the Sinners, and all their *Secret Sins*. Men must with some Agony of Soul, now cry out, [Psal. 90. 8.] *Lord, Thou hast set our Iniquities before thee, and our Secret Sin, in the Light of thy Countenance.* Men may *Cover their Sins* a long while; but they don't *prosper* in their doing so: God makes a *Discovery* of them. Sometimes the Holy God smites

ſmites them with ſuch Horror of *Conſcience*, that as 'tis ſaid, in Pſal. 64. 8. *They ſhall make their own Tongue to fall upon themſelves.* An *Achan* is brought into ſuch Diſtreſs and Horror of *Conſcience*, that he ſhall not be able to forbear Confeſſing, *Thus and thus have I Sinned, and thus hath my Sin found me out.* And ſometimes the Holy God leaves them to ſuch horrible *Scandals*, that all the Neighbourhood ſhall with Abhorrence gaze upon them. There was an *Impoſtor*, that had *bewitched* the people; he ſeem'd very pious, until God left him unto that Impiety, which made every one to ſay, as in Acts 8. 21, 23. *Thy Heart is not Right in the ſight of God, I perceive thou art in the Gall of Bitterneſs and the Bond of Iniquity.* A *Wolf in Sheeps Cloathing* will go on, perhaps many months together, until God permits the Clawes and the Teeth of a *Wolf* to be diſcern'd upon him in ſome *Scandalous Actions.* The Lord Jeſus Chriſt *knew* the *Secret Villanies* of theſe men, from the Beginning; but now he makes *all men* to *know* them; and when *that which was done in Darkneſs is heard in the Light*, when *that which was done in Cloſets, is proclaimed on the Houſe tops, Then* 'tis proved, That the Lord Jeſus Chriſt *knew* all along, what was done in *Darkneſs*, and *in the Cloſets.* The

Lord Jesus Christ lays upon such occasions, as He said concerning those infamous *False Prophets* of Old, in Jer. 29. 23. *They have committed Villany in Israel, and have committed Adultery with their Neighbours Wives, and have spoken Lying Words; even I know, and am a Witness, saith the Lord.*

Secondly; 'Tis most Remarkably in *Evangelical Churches*, that the Lord Jesus Christ who *Searches the Reins and the Hearts of men*, does by His *Wonderful Providence* discover the *Secret Sins* of men. In *Congregations* formed according to the Will of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is that *Secret Sinners* run the *greatest hazards* of that Vengeance, in Prov. 26. 26. *His Sin is covered with Deceit, his Wickedness shall be shew'd before the whole Congregation.* *Churches* of a pure Constitution, represent the *Kingdom of Heaven* unto the world: Men can't Sin at so cheap a rate in the *Kingdom of Heaven*, as they may in a dark *World*, or in *Churches* that are undistinguish'd from the *World*. The *Pure Churches* of the Lord Jesus Christ, are *Golden Candlesticks*: Can men think to Sin undiscovered in the midst of such *Candlesticks*? There are *Angels* burning in the Heads of them! There is a special and a dreadful *presence* of the Lord Jesus Christ, in *Churches*, that maintain the *Order of the Gospel*. Hence there are stupendous Dispensations of

His

His *Providence* in His *Churches*, to bring out those that shall there provoke his Infinite Majesty. Men may go on in a *Course of Profanity*, under a *Cloak of Piety*, for some while among the *Churches* of the Lord Jesus Christ; and they may applaud their own Contrivance, as long as they can Enjoy the Applause of the Deluded Neighbours. The Jealous Lord Jesus Christ beholds their Heaven daring Abominations, but with a Day of patience, He gives them a *Space to Repent* of the Abominable Things, by which they thus dare the Justice of Heaven. It may be said of them, *They consider not in their Hearts, that I remember all their Wickedness, that their doings are before my face, saith the Lord.* At last, the Jealousy of the Holy Lord breaks forth like Fire against them, and abandons them to some *Follies* that fully discover them. The Lord Jesus Christ, in His Burning Holiness, gives them up to an *Unclean Spirit*, a *Lying Spirit*, a *Thieving Spirit*, or some other *Evil Spirit*, and the Infatuated Wretches are exposed with Consternation and Execration to all the World; As it was said, in Psal. 52. 6, 7, 8. *Thy Tongue deviseth mischiefs: O thou deceitful Tongue, God shall take thee away, and root thee out; the Righteous also shall see and fear, and laugh at him; Lo, this is the man, that strengthened himself in his wickedness; but I am*

a Green Olive Tree in the House of God. This, is an Exclamation made in all the Churches; *Lo, this is the man, that would needs appear formebody among the Churches of the Lord Jesus Christ; but the Lord Jesus Christ, hath made all the Churches to know, that they were Deceived in him.*

Thirdly. When the *Wonderful Providence* of the Lord Jesus Christ in His *Churches*, by Discovering the *Secret Sins* of men, showes that He *Searches the Reins and Hearts* of Men, it is the Duty of the *Churches* to take much *Notice* of it. The *Providence* of the Lord Jesus Christ, sometimes does very Tremendous and Surprising Things, in His *Churches*, for the Discovering of *Secret Sinners*. The *Advocates of Sin*, will do all they can, to Resist that *Providence* of Heaven, and make nothing of *That*, which is plainly, *The Finger of God*. By such Doings, men bring upon themselves the Guilt of all the *Sin*, they go to Smother and Shelter, and the *Providence* of Heaven remains irresistible. Such *Partners* with *Sinners*, will do well to Tremble before that Word of God, in Psal. 28. 5. *Because they regard not the works of the Lord nor the operation of His Hands, He shall Destroy them.* In the mean time the *Churches* of the Lord Jesus Christ, are to *Take Notice* of what He does in His *Notable Providence*. When our Lord Jesus Christ

gives

gives us to see, That He *takes Notice* of His *Churches*, and of what is done among them, it becomes His *Churches* to *take Notice* of His *Providence*. Why, There are *Lessons* of Great Consequence, which the *Churches* are to Learn from that *Providence*, wherein they see Him *Searching the Reins & Hearts* of men. Tis a most *Observable* Thing, that is done by our Lord Jesus Christ in His *Providence*, when *Secret Sinners* are discovered. Now all the *Churches* are to *Observe* what is done: For, [Psal. 107. 43.] *Whoso is Wise, will observe these things.*

IV. The *Churches* of the Lord Jesus Christ, when they see Him *Searching the Reins and the Hearts* of men, in the Memorable works of His *Providence*, they should make a *Good Use* of what they see. All the *Churches* are to *Know*, That the Lord *Searches the Reins and the Hearts*; But how are they to *Know* it? Words of *Knowledge*, in the Sacred Language, import Suitable *Resentment*. Now,

First, All the *Churches* are to *Know*, That the Lord Jesus Christ *Searches the Reins and the Hearts*, for the *Comfort* of such *Hearts*, as are *Sound before Him*. Christians, Are your *Hearts* Vexed with any *Temptations*, or grieved for any *Corruptions*? I may say unto you, *Let not your Hearts be Troubled*; But *Know* for your

Comfort,

Comfort, under your *Uneasiness*, That the Lord Jesus Christ *Knows* all that renders your *Hearts* uneasy, and is ready to Succour you. Can you say with him, in Psal. 57. 7. *My Heart is Fixed, O God, my Heart is Fixed?* It is *Known* to the Lord Jesus Christ, who indeed was He that *Fixed* it. Yea, If there be but the least Spark of *Grace* in thy *Heart*, O man, 'Tis all *Known* unto the Lord Jesus Christ. There is not one *Good Motion*, but it is the Lord Jesus Christ that *Moved* it, and He *knows* what it is. Have any of us been *Accused* and *Reproached* by an Angry Generation of men, and are *Ill Constructions* made of our *Faithfulness*? What a comfortable *Cordial* may this be to our *Hearts*, That our Lord Jesus Christ *Knowes* how *Faithful* our *Hearts* have been unto Him? As he said in Job 16. 19. *Behold, my witness is in Heaven, and my Record is on high*; though my *Friends do Scorn me*: The Servants of the *Churches* cannot Escape the Severe censures of men, if they do what the Lord Jesus Christ would have them to do: But since *all the Churches Know*, That the Lord Jesus Christ *Searches the Hearts*, how Joyfully may we apply unto Him, *Lord, Thou knowest my Heart, I have said nothing, I have Writ nothing, I have done just nothing, but what my Heart assured me, it was my Duty to do!*

Secondly. All the *Churches* are to *Know*,

That

That the Lord Jesus Christ *Searches the Reins and the Hearts*; for our *Caution* against *Regarding Iniquity in our Hearts*. What a *Caution* have we, Sirs, What a powerful *Caution* against all Attempts, to *Mock* the Lord Jesus Christ, with *Hearts* that are *Deceitful above all things*, while they are *Desperately Wicked*? Let us in our *Churches* labour to approve our *Hearts* unto our Lord Jesus Christ, and let us not go to *Mock* our Lord Jesus Christ, with any meet *Shows* in Religion. What said the Man of God, in Job 13. 9. *Is it Good, that He should Search you out? Or as one man mocketh another, do ye so mock Him?* Let it be *Known*, Oh, let it be *Known* to all the *Churches*, That the Great God, who will not be *Mock'd*, will thoroughly *Discern*, and will terribly *Confound*, all those that go to *Mock* Him.

There are some such *Cautions* as these to be set before us.

1. Since our Lord Jesus Christ *Searches our Hearts*, Let us make sure, that our *Hearts* have the *Religion*, that we seem to have in our *Lives*. Let no man among us, be that man, in Jam. 1. 26. *A man that seemeth to be Religious, but Deceiveth his own Heart*. Make no Empty *Profession* of *Religion*; Let us *Internally*, and *Practically* be, what we *Profess*. Do we give our *Names* to our Lord Jesus Christ in His *Churches*? Let us give our *Hearts*

Hearts unto Him, as well as our *Names*. We *Profeſs* that we *Believe*; But we muſt, *Believe with all the Heart*. We *Profeſs* that we *Repent*: But we muſt *Repent with the whole Heart*. Make ſure of *New Hearts*, and of *True Hearts*, and of Souls Renewed with a real *Principle* of Religion Eſpecially, when you joyn your ſelves unto the *Churches* of the *Heart-Searching Lord*, be careful, O my Hearers, be careful to *Search your own Hearts*, and by an impartial *Self-Examination*, aſſure your ſelves, of your being by an *Heart-work* of real Converſion prepared for it.

II. Since our Lord Jeſus Chriſt *Searches our Hearts*, Let us Bring *our Hearts* unto Him, in all the Exerciſes of *Religion*, & offer the *Inwards*, as well as the *Outwards*. Let us not be like thoſe, of whom tis ſaid, in Iſa. 29.13. *This People draw near me with their Mouth, and with their Lips do honour me, but have removed their Heart far from me*. Remember we, that the *God* whom we worſhip, is a *Spirit*; and *He will be worſhipped in Spirit and in Truth*; if we do not worſhip Him *in Spirit*, we do it not *in Truth*. It is not Enough, that we ſerve the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, with *External Appearances*: The *Righteous Judgment* of God, is not according to ſuch *Appearances*. What ſaid the Pſalmiſt, *Bleſs the Lord, O my Soul*? In *Praying*, Let us

be

be able to say, *Lord, I Lift up my Soul unto thee.* In *Hearing*, be able to say, *Lord, I hide thy Word in my Heart.* Oh, do not go to put off the *Living* God, with a *Dead* Carcase of Devotions.

III. Since our Lord Jesus Christ *Searches our Hearts*, Let not our *Hearts*, in declaring for the Interests of *Religion*, have any Indirect Glances at inferiour Interests. For persons to put on a *Cloak* of *Zeal* for the Lord Jesus Christ, but aim only at Advancing of themselves, and their own Corrupt Humours, it will provoke Him that *Searches the Hearts*, to say unto them, as in Act. 5. 4. *Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine Heart? Thou hast not Lyed unto men, but unto God.* When we attend the *Means* of Grace, the Lord Jesus Christ *Searches our Hearts*, whether it be meerly for *Credit*, or *Custome*; or, whether it be to *Draw Water out of the Wells of Salvation.* When we seek after *Church fellowship*, the Lord Jesus Christ *Searches our Hearts*, whether it be to Gain a *Good Esteem* among men; or, whether it be to *build up our selves in our most holy Faith.* When we give our *Alms*, our Lord Jesus Christ *Searches our Hearts*, whether it be to avoid *Contempt* on Earth; or, Whether it be to *Lay up a Treasure in Heaven.* When we are forward in prosecuting

Offendors,

Offendors, the Lord Jesus Christ *Searches our Hearts*, whether we have a single Respect unto the *Honour* of God; or, whether we Respect a piece of *Revenge* upon our Adversary. Oh, Let nothing be done in the *Churches*, on *By Ends*, or for *Self-Ends*; because the *Churches* are to *know*, the Lord Jesus Christ *Searches our Hearts*, for the *Ends* which they are acted withal.

IV. Since our Lord Jesus Christ *Searches our Hearts*, and makes the *Churches to know*, that He doth so, Let none in our *Churches*, under *seeming Sanctity* indulge any *Secret Villany*. The *Pharisees* of old, were a very demure, and precise kind of men; yea, there were notable *Preachers* among them: and yet! [see Joh. 8. 9.] Their Consciences flew in their faces, that they were secretly, Lewd, Wanton, Filthy *Satyrs*, and the *Abhorred of the Lord*. For persons to carry a Face of more than ordinary strictness and fervour in *Religion*, and yet for these persons to be very *Devils in secret*, what is this to be indeed, but even *Devils Incarnate*? All Temptations with which the Devil urges you to Sin, from the notion of *Secrecy*, repel with this Answer, *'Tis impossible there ever should be a Secret Sin.* As one solicited unto Lewdness, with this Argument, *The Doors are shut*, replyed, *No, but*

you

you have not shut the Lord Jesus Christ out of Doors! We read, *God is terrible out of His Holy Places.* Why, *Churches* of the Lord Jesus Christ, are *Holy Places*: *Church-Members* are in *Holy Places.* If you that are in those *Holy Places*, will *secretly* allow your selves in *Unholy practices*, be it *known* unto you, O ye *Mockers* of the Lord that *knows* what you do, 'tis a *Terrible Thing*, that He will do upon you. Especially, Let the *Ministers* of the Gospel, beware, that they *Seek not the oversight of a Flock of God for filthy Lucre*; and beware that while *they Prophesy in the Name of the Lord, they be not the Workers of Iniquity*: Lest the Judgments of the Lord Jesus Christ, should Thunder strike them, as He did those Young Ministers, upon whose Tragical Death He said, *I will be Sanctified by them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be Glorified.*

In fine, Let us all make that Petition, unto the Lord, who *Searches the Reins and the Hearts*, in Psal. 139. 23, 24. *Search me, O God, and know my Heart; try me, and know my Thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and Lead me in the way Everlasting.*

Lumina quis fallet semper aperta Dei?

FINIS.

Advertiſement.

THere is prepared for the Preſs, a very Seaſonable Book, Entituled, *The Order of the Goſpel*: Profeſſed and Practiſed by the Churches of Chriſt in *New-England*; Juſtified by the Scripture, and by the Writings of many Learned Men, both Ancient and Modern Divines: In Anſwer to ſeveral Queſtions relating to Church-Diſcipline.

By the Reverend *Increaſe Mather*, Præſident of *Harvard-Colledge* in *Cambridge*, and Teacher of a Church in *Boſton*, *New-England*.